

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-83 (cancelled)

84. (Currently amended) A fabric assembly comprising:

a flexible substrate having a top surface; and

a plurality of continuous, non-overlapping and approximately identical metal plates having substantially uniform thickness of approximately 2 to 5 mils, the plurality of metal plates affixed to the top surface of the flexible substrate and arrayed in a pattern such that a plurality of approximately linear gaps are defined between adjacent affixed plates, wherein the gaps are approximately uniform in width, and wherein the gap width is approximately 2 to 5 mils.

85. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 84 wherein the plurality of plates comprise stainless steel.

86. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 84 wherein the substantially uniform thickness of the plurality of plates is approximately 2 mils.

87. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 84 wherein the plurality of plates are equilateral hexagons.

88. (cancelled) ~~The fabric assembly of claim 87 wherein the equilateral hexagons are identical.~~

89. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 84 wherein the flexible substrate comprises non-woven polyurethane and nylon synthetic leather.

90. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 84 wherein the plate thickness is approximately equal to the gap width.

91. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 84 further comprising an adhesive layer affixing the plurality of plates to the top surface of the flexible substrate.

92. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 91 wherein the adhesive layer is polyurethane adhesive.

93. (Previously presented) A fabric assembly comprising:
a flexible substrate having a top surface;
a plurality of polymeric resin plates having substantially uniform thickness of approximately 5 to 20 mils, the plurality of plates affixed to the top surface of the flexible substrate and arrayed in a pattern such that a plurality of continuous gaps are defined between adjacent plates, wherein the gaps are approximately uniform in width; and
a wire mesh embedded in each plate and completely covered by the top surface by each plate.

94. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 93 wherein the plate thickness is approximately 10 to 12 mils.

95. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 93 wherein the gap width is approximately 7 mils.

96. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 93 wherein the polymeric resin comprises epoxy resin.

97. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 93 wherein the plurality of plates each are shaped as identical equilateral hexagons.

98. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 97 wherein the hexagons are approximately 60 mils in diameter.

99. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 93 wherein the wire mesh is stainless steel.

100. (Currently amended) A fabric assembly comprising:

- a first flexible substrate having a first plurality of continuous, non-overlapping plates affixed to a top surface of the first flexible substrate;
- a second flexible substrate having a second plurality of continuous, non-overlapping plates affixed to a top surface of the second flexible substrate; and
- a third flexible substrate having a third plurality of continuous, non-overlapping plates affixed to a top surface of the third flexible substrate, wherein the flexible substrates are arranged in a stack, and wherein each plurality of plates is arrayed in a pattern such that a plurality of approximately linear gaps are defined between adjacent affixed plates, wherein each substrate is capable of movement relative to the other substrates, wherein each gap is approximately uniform in width in the range of about 5 mils to 20 mils, and wherein each plate has an approximately uniform thickness in the range of 5 to 20 mils.

101. (Currently amended) The fabric assembly of claim 100 wherein ~~each plate is an equilateral hexagon and made of polymeric resin,~~ and ~~wherein each plurality of gaps are approximately uniform in~~

~~width in the range of about 5 mils to 20 mils.~~

102. (Currently amended) The fabric assembly of claim 101 wherein each equilateral hexagon is made of polymeric resin~~has an approximately uniform thickness in the range of about 5 mils to 20 mils.~~

103. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 102 wherein each equilateral hexagon has a diameter in the range of about 60 to 80 mils.

104. (Currently Amended) A fabric assembly comprising:

a first flexible substrate having a first plurality of continuous, non-overlapping plates affixed to a top surface of the first flexible substrate;

a second flexible substrate having a second plurality of continuous, non-overlapping plates affixed to a top surface of the second flexible substrate; and

a third flexible substrate having a third plurality of continuous, non-overlapping plates affixed to a top surface of the third flexible substrate, wherein the flexible substrates are arranged in a stack, and wherein each plurality of plates is arrayed in a pattern such that a plurality of gaps are defined between adjacent affixed plates, wherein each plate is an equilateral hexagon made of polymeric resin, wherein each plurality of gaps is approximately uniform in width in the range of about 5 mils to 20 mils, and wherein each equilateral hexagon has an approximately uniform thickness in the range of about 5 mils to 20 mils, and ~~The fabric assembly of claim 102 wherein one of the pluralities of plates have a larger gap width and plate diameter than the other two pluralities of~~

plates.

105. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 104 wherein the other two pluralities of plates each have a plate diameter in a range of 60 to 80 mils.

106. (currently amended) A fabric assembly comprising:

a first flexible substrate having a first plurality of plates affixed to a top surface of the first flexible substrate; and

a second flexible substrate having a second plurality of plates affixed to a bottom surface of the second flexible substrate, wherein the first and second flexible substrates are arranged in a stack, the first and second pluralities of plates opposite facing, and wherein each plurality of plates is arrayed in a pattern such that a plurality of approximately linear gaps are defined between adjacent affixed plates, each plate being continuous and non-overlapping, and wherein each gap is approximately uniform in width in the range of about 5 mils to 20 mils.

107. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 106 further comprising a third flexible substrate between the first and second flexible substrates.

108. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 107 wherein the third flexible substrate comprises a woven fabric.

109. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 108 wherein the first and second flexible substrates comprise a woven material and the first and second pluralities of plates comprise a polymeric resin.

110. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 109 wherein the third flexible substrate comprises nylon.

111. (Previously presented) The fabric assembly of claim 110 wherein each plate is an equilateral hexagon having a diameter equal or greater than 80 mils, the diameter selected to maintain flexibility and puncture-resistance of the fabric assembly.

112. (Cancelled) ~~The fabric assembly of claim 110 wherein each plurality of gaps are in the range of 10 to 20 mils.~~